

PEACE NEWS

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2d.

Pacifism and Politics

THERE is much in common between the current attitude of the anti-war section of the left wing, and the political approach of a large section of the pacifist movement. Both have tried to offer the man in the street something immediate and pleasant as an alternative to the Government's prosecution of the war, and both have refused to pursue their logic to its inescapable end.

For the man in the street is not to be beguiled by programmes which depend for their validity on an attitude of willingness on the part of Hitler to concur in some proposal; or

on the part of the German people to overthrow their leaders. The answer of the plain man is simply "What if they don't?"

That answer is logically valid, and it must not receive an evasion. If the reply of the pacifist is "Then we had rather that the other side work its will on us, than that we attempt to overcome it in total war," the plain man is satisfied; and in rejecting it he does so with a trace of respect for what he cannot accept. For deep down in his heart he still feels that he has rejected the Christian way.

This, then, is the gulf which separates us from the majority of our fellow countrymen. What are we to do in the political issues which require that we work together?

To advocate sensible social reforms and national policies, is certainly a job for everyone; and self-government for India, better treatment for pensioners, the adoption of the Beveridge Report and so on, is the business of every intelligent citizen. But it is not pacifism in action, it is simply ordinary common decency expressed in humane conduct; and if someone should feel that surely, after all, pacifism is just common decency, then he will find plenty of it in the army.

Where Pacifism Begins

These reforms can be achieved by power politics, and probably will be. But pacifism only begins in politics, where I left off in my introductory paragraphs. The willingness to suffer. The resolve that if there is no other way, then the other side must do their will on us. The faith that patience and sympathetic understanding must be lived by us now, if society is to have any leaven.

This is not a sentimental desire for martyrdom, but an acceptance of the fact that since the only other alternative is in the last analysis the acceptance of total war, with its corollary of total hate; then it must be total love.

Once we have accepted the necessity of a faith based on love, we realize how little what Murry has called the "Natural Man" is capable of that love, and how half-hearted our efforts are.

We shall often feel that we are sentimental, and we shall more often be reminded that we are, but I believe that we shall have found our dynamic, and our place in history.

Act of Repentance

Just how far the majority of our fellow-countrymen are from the individual act of repentance is a measure of how far pacifism is from having any immediate political relevance. For in the modern world, pacifism and politics as we know them are diametrically opposed.

Politics today is an attempt to evade the individual repentance which pacifism calls for; just as the League of Nations was an attempt to evade the national repentance which the last war called for.

Yet we would be self-righteous indeed if we gave the impression that fiscal policy and social legislation did not concern us. This is just the

ARMISTICE

will be the subject of the main article by the Rev. Patrick Figgis in next week's Peace News

which will be a SIX-PAGE ISSUE

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criticism which our opponents have levelled against us, and which is not without its core of truth.

For even the small community must not abrogate its responsibilities to the larger and less moral community of which it is a part. I believe that it is at this point that the difference between pacifist and non-pacifist political action lies.

The Beloved Community

The pacifist sees himself and other men as individuals with unique value as spiritual beings; therefore he must regard the intention and the reason as fundamentally important, when passing judgment on human conduct.

If a man enters into the political arena in the full consciousness that at the best his action can only be palliative, and that always he will be back to a point where the raw material which conditions politics lets him down; then his reasons are similar to the reasons for agitating to stop the war.

He knows that stopping the war is just the human desire to end what is to him an obscenity. He also knows that pressing for the adoption of the Beveridge Report, or some similar measure, is the equally human desire to end a social obscenity. But neither act, of necessity, brings us nearer to the "Beloved Community," which we believe to be the heart's desire of all human beings.

Limitation of Politics

We must realize, therefore, that politics can only take us so far, but that the essential change which will make the "Beloved Community" a possibility must be made as individuals.

The difference between such a person and the average member of the Labour Party is that, while both do the same deed politically, one does so with a naivety which has not even touched the fringe of the problem; while the other realizes that such action can never go far enough. The tendency is to do the right deed for the wrong reason, or rather for a mistaken reason.

It is difficult to demonstrate the precise relationship which a man trying to live the values of the "Beloved Community" in a Glasgow tenement has to the big things which are happening in Europe. But it is my faith and conviction that there is between them a relationship which is fundamental: that the moving of great armies across Europe may well be a small thing a hundred years hence; while the rebirth of one man in a teeming city is an occurrence of cosmic significance.

DAVID KENNEDY

PACIFIST COMMENTARY: EDITED BY "OBSERVER"

"According to Plan"?

BARELY two months ago Gen. Eisenhower informed the world that the Tunisian campaign would be "long, laborious and costly"; now he informs it that the very complete victory was won on scheduled time. The statements are irreconcilable. What I deduce from them is that Gen. Eisenhower simply didn't know; and I suspect that his second statement isn't true. Anyhow, it would have been more convincing if he had said originally that he simply didn't know.

Correspondents have written to castigate me for my feeling that the European war may end fairly soon. I can't help having a feeling. It did not pretend to be rationally grounded. "I'm sure," writes one correspondent to the Editor, "that he is speaking for himself and not for the PPU when he believes that the war will end soon." Apart from the fact that I have no shadow of a right to speak for the PPU, I could hardly have made it clearer that I was speaking for myself alone. I didn't even say that I "believed" the war would end soon.

Burma "Sideshow"

FROM the composition of Mr. Churchill's entourage during his discussions in America, it is deduced that much attention of the conference is being given to the Far Eastern war. At the same time the American press is ventilating the urgency of the need for beginning some sort of serious offensive against Japan, which is probably regarded by a majority of Americans as Enemy No. 1.

Point is given to the demand by the complete failure, now avowed, of the Arakan campaign. This is more bitterly commented on in Australia than here. The Sydney Herald calls it "a completely futile sideshow" (E. News, May 13). But even the News Chronicle correspondent (May 17) insists that the British were outfought and outmanoeuvred by the Japanese, who in jungle warfare are still definitely our superiors. A more balanced verdict is:

"The presence in Washington of the chiefs of staff of the Indian theatre guarantees that there will be no neglect of the Eastern offensive. Against this, the withdrawal at Buthidaung—although not the superiority of the Japanese troops—is a small matter" (Economist, May 15).

FOR HEADQUARTERS

OVER a year ago Peace News set itself to raise a special Headquarters Fund of £1,000 in order to put an end to the condition of chronic financial stringency at Headquarters during the trying period in which the new method of financing the movement through regular Area contributions was being established.

The appeal, which was made fortnightly on this page, was discontinued, after reaching £600, to make way for the Dick Sheppard House Fund appeal. To the raising of the remaining £400 Peace News is pledged. The time has now come, the Treasurers say, to implement the pledge with the least possible delay.

Let us do it in record time!

Headquarters has been heavily tried of late. In this time of trial, it has undertaken commitments on behalf of the movement to which it is in honour bound. It is up to every one of us to do what we can to ease the position forthwith.

From now onward, till the goal is reached, this appeal will appear, and progress be reported by the Treasurers themselves, once a fortnight, alternating with the appeal for the Peace News Fund. The PPU boat has been rocking rather violently for some months, since its memorable achievement of freeing Dick Sheppard House from debt. Now is the time for steady pulling again.

Please send contributions, plainly marked "HEADQUARTERS FUND" to Peace News, 3 Blackstock Rd., London, N.4.

THE EDITOR

THE larger contention is that the reopening of the Mediterranean by the Tunisian victory is "the curtain-raiser to the recapture of Burma via Rangoon and the great river valleys"; and it is suggested that the saving of shipping will make such a campaign possible. How tight the shipping situation was at the peak of the Tunisian campaign is indicated by Mr. Mabane's confession:

"For three months after the landing in N. Africa the total shipping available to my department was barely sufficient to bring in even the grain we needed for use during that period" (E. News, May 13).

Since any landing on the European continent will make a much heavier demand on shipping than the Tunisian campaign, the suggestion of a simultaneous large-scale offensive in Burma seems impracticable. Granted that the saving of shipping by the reopening of the Mediterranean must be very considerable, it will be absorbed by the second front in Europe.

How Overthrow Fascism?

THAT is an amateur's guess at the factual background of the American conference. One concludes that, in spite of pressure from American opinion, the Casablanca conclusions will be reaffirmed and elaborated. The war in Europe will continue to have an absolute priority. From that (I imagine) the conference, having determined where the assault shall begin, will go on to consider how the European fortress may be "softened."

Straightway the question of propaganda for Europe arises. Are we going to make things easy for Italy to get out of the war? I note that Mr. Shinwell is saying that "we might possibly consider the restoration of the former Italian possessions if the present Fascist régime were replaced by a democracy, and they agreed to our terms of unconditional surrender" (Times, May 17). Mr. Shinwell is not important in himself, but as symptomatic of Left Labour opinion.

But the great difficulty of overthrowing Fascism is to find a real alternative government. Mussolini has been in control of Italy for more than 20 years. How can any subsequent government avoid using the Fascist officials? The problem has been thorny enough in N. Africa, where the Vichy Government had barely two years' control. It is going to be far more serious in Italy.

Fear of Germany

THE problem of Germany is thornier still. Between German Nazism and Italian Fascism there is a slight moral difference of which Englishmen are aware. Italian Fascism has not embarked on the inhuman savagery against the Jews, which has disgraced Nazism for ever; neither, so far as I know, has it treated political minorities with quite the same brutality. In the non-moral sphere there is a mighty difference between Nazism and Fascism, of which Englishmen are also aware: Germany is formidable in a way in which Italy can never be. We are genuinely afraid of what Germany has done and may do again.

This accounts for the latest success of "Vansittartism"—the formation of a committee of Conservative MPs to press for severe treatment of Germany. Their demands include the political separation from Germany of the Rhineland and Westphalia; and East Prussia (and presumably Austria also); and—surely fantastic—"Allied determination of the curriculum of university and school studies" (Sunday Times, May 16).

(Continued on page 2)

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Communism of Pacifists

"THE Community movement, as a movement, has no coherent interpretation of history," said Bill Grindlay last week. If this means that many individual adherents to the Community movement do not base their activity on a coherent interpretation of history it may be true; but if it means that the Community movement cannot be supported by a coherent interpretation of history, it is mistaken.

The Community movement can, and in certain of its advocates certainly does, accept the Marxist interpretation of history, as far as it is valid. It affirms that the Marxist interpretation, though invaluable, is incomplete. As a theory of revolution, in advanced capitalist democracy, it neglects the crucial problem of how a revolutionary morale is to be sustained in a society which has ethically passed beyond the use of violence for domestic political ends. It affirms that, in such a society, at any rate, it is manifest that the end is implicit in the means. To attempt to achieve a society of brotherhood by means of violence is, in a democracy, self-defeating, because it involves an ethical regression.

Moreover, in such a society, at once industrially advanced and politically non-violent, State-socialism comes automatically. The enormous strides towards State-socialism during the present war are evident. The problem is to humanize this inevitable State-socialism—to prevent it becoming a huge centralized bureaucracy completely controlling the lives of machine-men. Ultimately, this can only be done by setting in motion a devolutionary movement, having for its basis (or its aim) a real reconciliation in concrete human experience of the demands for social solidarity and individual fulfilment.

Thus Community claims to have a more coherent and more comprehensive interpretation of history than Communism. In other words, if the Communist movement were to face its own problems in this country fearlessly, it would be driven to become a Community movement. In fact, of course, it ignores these problems completely; its policy is completely governed by the overriding consideration of supporting Soviet Russia in the present war-struggle. To this end, it will even work to paralyse the democratic evolution of this country by discouraging and attacking those elements in the Labour Party which see the need of creating a parliamentary opposition to the National Government.

Communism, in spite of its present popularity, is now quite incoherent. Compared with it, no doubt, the Community movement is very small, and to a large extent still socially unrealistic. Considered as abstract theory, there is some truth in Mr. Grindlay's statement that "the place for our Community experiments is in the heart of a society totally organized for war." But what does that mean in fact? It means in the factory plant: the last place on earth where a Community can be created under conditions of total war. In fact, the chief opportunity for Community is in that branch of necessary industry which is most resistant to total subordination to the exigencies of mechanical mass-production, namely, agriculture. For Community is not a sentiment; it is a method of life-production: a method whereby men may produce their livelihood and not suffer a vital degradation of their manhood in the process. And it has to contrive this in the interstices of total war-organization.

Therefore, nothing could well be further from the mark than Mr. Grindlay's statement that the member of the land-community "chooses a personal salvation and a very long-term and inchoate philosophy of social action in preference to the veritable anguish of sharing the frustration of the mass while

Dame SYBIL THORNDIKE

has given the following explanation of her part in the recent Albert Hall

"SALUTE to RUSSIA"

"(It was called 'Salute to the Soviet Army,' she writes, 'after I had been asked and accepted, and it came as a bit of a surprise to me, though that doesn't make it any less 'shady' from a PPU Sponsor's point of view!')

I had meant to write to the PPU at once, explaining what I was doing and why, but I had a bit of a breakdown from worry and work and I just had to save every bit of energy to carry on my own job of theatre-playing. I'm sorry about this though.

BRIEFLY—or as briefly as I can ever explain anything—I wanted to salute the Russian people more than I can say in words. I don't agree with war—in any circumstances. I think the Government could and should have averted this horror and wickedness. But I want to salute those who have suffered from it—and have suffered heroically—I don't care whether they are Army, Navy, conscientious objectors or what.

I haven't words to say how I respect the physical and moral courage and endurance of the soldiers, sailors, and airmen (and I do know something of the lives of the soldiers from my boy and his many fine friends) in agonizing circumstances, and I believe, even if one doesn't agree with war, that one must recog-

nize the sacrifice and bravery of the men in the services.

The Russian people to my mind have suffered more than any, for all they have lost was something they had worked for with supreme personal effort, and I think the loss of all they had built is a tragic and terrible thing—far more than cathedrals and beauty spots and monuments that we'd not built or cared for specially as they had cared for their land and new creative experiment.

I read through my script for that function very carefully and would not say a word that I couldn't feel sincerely. I was only a Recorder impersonating History, voicing an historical happening—not giving an opinion.

But the occasion was to the ordinary public much more a salute to the Army of Russia from our Army, Navy, and Air Force than (as I had taken it to be) a salute to a suffering and self-sacrificing people. Not until the dress rehearsal did I realise quite how military it all was.

It was organized very quickly, no-one could have taken my place even had I wanted to get out of it—or learnt the stuff in time. So in a way I had to be like Naaman and say "When I go to the house of whatever God it was, please don't let the Lord be too annoyed if I have to bow the knee. I'll be praying the right prayer all the same."

COMMENTARY

It all depends — !

NATURALLY, pacifists abhor such a scheme. Politically, this one is unrealistic, if only because it ignores what Russia will have to say. And since many members of the Committee were prominently identified with the policy of "appeasement," we may take it that they would be horrified if Russia proposed a Communist curriculum.

The truth is that the problem of the post-war treatment of Germany is insoluble, in the present state of relations between the "United Nations." What will be done—and that is not the same as a solution—depends, as M. Litvinov said, upon who gets to Berlin first. The ideal solution, from the liberal British point of view, would be the creation of a stable democracy in Germany.

But it is doubtful, even supposing the Americans and Britons do get there first, whether this is a practicable policy. Quite obviously, if it is to be combined with the infliction of Conservative Committee peace terms on Germany, it would be self-defeating. The new democratic government would become the Quisling government in German eyes. Finally, what reason is there to suppose that such a "solution" would be acceptable to Russia? Russia has no interest in democracy.

A "Peoples' Peace"?

THUS we come, as we always come, back to the fundamental question: the possibility of solid political agreement between Britain and America, and Russia. It seems impossible to me. Certainly one never hears of any real advance towards it. True, Ambassador Davies carries a personal letter from Roosevelt to Stalin; but M. Litvinov leaves Washington just as Mr. Churchill arrives.

Yet manifestly, if there is to be any effective propaganda for softening German morale, it must be an offer of a tolerable future to the German people based on post-war political agreement between Britain and America and Russia. The amount of humbug talked and written about this problem is nauseating.

Some pacifists even talk about "a peoples' peace," meaning by that, as far as it can be understood at all, a peace between a Socialist Britain and a Socialist Germany. Where, one asks, do Socialist America and Socialist Russia come in? Socialism, in fact, means different things in all these countries; and communism means something quite different from all these things. If, however, a peoples' peace means a peace concluded between functioning democracies, you are back at the original problem: How to make democracy function in Germany?

Russo-American Deal?

WHAT is more likely to happen, I fancy, than solid political agreement between Britain, USA, and Russia, is some effort at a direct deal between USA and Russia. If Russia will give a hand in settling Japan's hash, Roosevelt might be able to overcome the powerful anti-Russian sentiment in America.

"All the national groups in America—especially the Slavs and the Scandinavians—are

being aware of it as the mass is not." Apart from the fact that there is no virtue in anguish for its own sake, the Community movement, in so far as it is a conscious movement, is not an escape from frustration but a direct resolution of it.

In a word, the Community movement is essentially the Communism of pacifists: precisely of those who, accepting the Marxist theory of history as far as it goes, have reached the irrevocable decision that they refuse internal violence. They are more than Democratic Socialists, because they have faced the problem of maintaining a revolutionary morale in a political democracy, the absence of which has been fatal to Social Democracy on the Continent, and will be here, except in so far as it is sustained by Community.

Continued from page 1

being bombarded with propaganda telling them that the small nations are exchanging Hitlerite for Bolshevik domination. The Polish frontier incident has been as much a godsend to the isolationists as to Goebbels; Labour circles have been deeply stirred and upset by the execution in Russia of the Jewish trade union leaders Alter and Ehrlich. Catholics are traditionally hostile, and the Polish question is increasing their intransigence" (Economist, May 15).

But an anti-Japanese deal between USA and Russia would only postpone the problem of Europe. USA would withdraw its manifest objections to a Russian settlement of Eastern Europe. Britain would be left with the baby.

Advice to Pacifists

THE tangle is formidable, I insist; and no good is done by idealistic simplification. A Socialist United States of Europe is a very pretty dream, as long as you don't worry about how to get it, or what is meant by Socialism, or whether the present British Government has any inclination at all in that direction. I spend much (probably far too much) of my time trying to discern the pattern of the immediate political future: and the effect it has upon me is steadily to deepen my conviction that pacifism is not politics.

Pacifism has no political solution for Europe: except that a majority of Europeans should be pacifists. If that be unattainable in the near future (as it is) then the pacifist may choose what he considers the best possible political organization of a non-pacifist world. But when he has decided that—and it will necessarily be an organization, like Federal Union, which conflicts with his pacifist principles—he has to ask himself the further question: What chance is there of getting even that? The answer is: devilish little.

My advice to pacifists is the advice I give to myself: Clear your mind of cant! A practical question that may help the process is: Are you in favour of General Franco's offer to mediate an armistice and peace? If not, why not?

OPEN LETTER TO THE PREMIER

In open letter to the Prime Minister, Christianity Calling makes the following proposal:—

"That the moment it becomes apparent that the prospect of victory lies within our grasp, an offer of peace should be made to the peoples of the Axis countries assuring them of a fair place in the new economy of World Freedom to be established. Such a courageous act of moral restraint on our part would be likely to have four valuable effects:—

"1. If successful, this action would save the vast holocaust of precious lives the invasion of Europe must entail. 2. It would vindicate the constantly avowed humanitarian purpose of the United Nations in prosecuting the war. 3. It would raise enormously the moral standards and hopes of mankind, so terribly depressed by the war. 4. It would assure the Axis peoples that they have nothing to fear in forsaking their present leaders. "Such a peace offer should contain, of course, conditions that will restore the freedom of the peoples overrun by the Axis. You will know better than most people how such an offer should be made to achieve the maximum effect upon the world at large."

Copies of this letter can be obtained, price 5d. per dozen, 3s. per 100, from Christianity Calling, 25 Windermere Ct, Wembley, Middlesex.

THE basis of the Peace Pledge Union is the following pledge which is signed by each member:

I RENOUNCE WAR AND I WILL NEVER SUPPORT OR SANCTION ANOTHER. The address to which new signatures of the pledge should be sent, and from which further particulars may be obtained is:

★ PPU HEADQUARTERS. ★
Dick Sheppard Hse., Endsleigh St., W.C.1.

Lord Ponsonby reflects on

GOVERNMENTS IN EXILE

THE serious dispute between the Soviet Government and the exiled Government of Poland was bound to emerge sooner or later. It is perhaps better that it should break out before rather than after the end of the war. The discovery of the corpses of Polish officers was not the cause of it. But this was used by the Nazi propagandists as a handy and effective match to set fire to far more serious differences.

It has seemed convenient to our Government to have several exiled Governments located in London suburbs. But we do not know how far they represent or can be in touch with the changing opinions in their countries. Let us hope we are not making too many promises to them of the help we shall give them when fighting has ceased. In many cases differences will appear which will make any undertakings on the part of the British Government impossible of fulfilment. But it is so easy to reach "the Government," even of a far distant nation, in a taxi!

World Armed Force?

DISCUSSION has begun, and very properly, about what sort of international body is to take the place of the League of Nations. A useful start has been made in a debate in the House of Lords where some thoughtful speeches were made. There are likely to be more debates on it in both Houses.

After the last war, in 1918, when the constitution and powers of the original League of Nations were under discussion, I sat on a Committee presided over by Lord Bryce, and my chief argument was that it would be fatal if armed force were instituted as the basis of the League's authority. But it was, I intend, if I can find the opportunity, to return to this theme. So I will say no more here, in the hope that I may have a chance of dealing with this subject fully in public.

No Popular Crusade

MANY people of different social strata, from agricultural labourers to well-to-do middle class families, talk to me about the war and its seemingly indefinite continuance.

The dislocation of normal life makes many disgruntled and impatient. The casualties, never fully reported, shock the more humanitarian people, doubtful as to the price which is being paid for very problematic rewards in the future. The fatalistic refusal to read or listen to the news. "This is war," they say, "so we must expect to be driven and forced to do jobs we should not have dreamt of. But there have been wars before and there will be wars again."

But I have not heard any one say: "This wonderful fight for freedom is worth all the sacrifices we can give, down to our very lives." In fact, to say that the war is a great popular crusade for a better world is sheer nonsense.

Arthur Ponsonby

Neither the Peace Pledge Union nor Peace News itself is necessarily committed to views expressed in the articles we publish. (Still less does the acceptance of advertisements imply endorsement of any views expressed or implied therein or PPU connection with the matter advertised). Contributions are welcomed, though no payment is made. They should be typewritten, if possible, and one side only of the paper should be used. They may not be returned unless a stamped addressed envelope is enclosed, nor can we undertake to acknowledge all correspondence owing to increased cost of postage.

The Northern Friends' Peace Board states

THE CASE FOR PEACE BY NEGOTIATION

A 16 pp. pamphlet, price 3d. (by post 4d.) obtainable from the Secretary N.F.P.B., Friends' Meeting House, Clifford Street, York.

The P. P. U. Armistice Campaign

Letters to the Editor

Owing to the large number of claims on our severely limited space, correspondents are urged to keep their letters very brief, and preferably under 250 words.

THE AGM's desire for an armistice campaign is something to rejoice in. I offer two suggestions for its working out.

(a) The PPU stands for unconditional loyalty to the way of friendship. In pleading for an armistice we shall be asking for something less than the pacifist policy which we personally desire. Our literature should make this clear.

(b) We should recognize the probability that some members' contribution to the armistice campaign will be continued work for India, or Food Relief. I agree that, while war persists, complete success is unlikely in that for Food Relief. And I think this fact should be admitted by the campaigners; otherwise, such sectional campaigns may do harm as well as good, since support for them may quieten the uneasy consciences of humanitarian non-pacifists. But essentially all these campaigns are one, and we must make the personal decision: through which can I most fundamentally alter public opinion?

KATHLEEN RAWLINS

41 Charles St., Berkhamsted, Herts.

Gas Warfare

No doubt many of your readers share my distrust at Mr. Churchill's recent announcement of his intention to use gas as a reprisal in the event of the German army using it in Russia. Were it suggested that our army should use it directly against the German army, that is a matter for the military commanders. But the suggestion is that it should be used against such alleged military objectives as armament towns and naval bases.

What sort of military objective is offered by any town, from the point of view of gas warfare? The population are provided with gas masks, so that after the first attack, no one need be in danger who can use a mask. But there are those who cannot wear gas masks or who find them difficult to wear and who are therefore in danger. These people are babies, old men and women, and all those with weak hearts. Where is the military objective in these people? For these are the people who will suffer: those who have no part in the war. Whilst those against whom it is directed remain safe, if slightly inconvenienced.

Again, we are assured that the people of the occupied countries, in which are situated the ports and some of the armaments towns, are provided with efficient protection? We may be sure that the occupying troops have the best that German science can produce. Further, if we use gas, the German High Command will become convinced that gas is a good weapon and will drop it on us, killing those of our people who cannot use gas masks.

But is gas a good weapon from the military point of view? The answer is an emphatic negative. It hits no military objective. It is difficult to use. It is wasteful to transport. In effect its only value is to the propaganda department, whilst the effect on the civilian population is nothing short of ghastly.

I appeal that this Christian country, said to be fighting for Christian ideals, should not be the first to drop vesicants on civilians; nor, in the event of their being dropped on us, retaliate lest we convince the enemy of the value of an ineffective and horrible method of war. I appeal that thoughts of retribution should not cloud our reason and lead us to useless bestiality. I appeal above all that innocent babies and invalids may not be slaughtered. God grant that I do not appeal in vain.

JOHN E. HAYES,
Assistant G.I.O.

Cookham Hill House,
33 Hill Rd., Borsdal.

WORDS OF PEACE — 21

Friends for Ever

Sir Thomas More to his judges after sentence of death, 1535.

MORE have I not to say (my Lords) but like as the blessed Apostle St. Paul, as we read in the Acts of the Apostles, was present, and consented to the death of St. Stephen, and kept their clothes that stoned him to death, and yet be they now both twain holy saints in heaven, and shall continue there friends for ever, so I verily trust and shall therefore right heartily pray, that though your Lordships have now in earth been judges to my condemnation, we may yet hereafter in heaven merrily all meet together to our everlasting salvation.

From William Roper's
Life of Sir Thomas More.

— IF and BUT !

I am not much enamoured of resolutions—good or bad: I have watched the passing of too many—writes

JOHN MIDDLETON MURRY

Moreover, I have never been at all convinced that the Peace Pledge Union is a movement that can express itself satisfactorily by means of resolutions. It was not for nothing that the basis of the movement—never superseded—is a pledge to renounce war taken by individuals. That, I believe, constitutes a profound difference between the PPU and any political organization—a difference which (I also believe) has yet to find adequate expression through the machinery of our Annual General Meeting. Probably no machinery can adequately express this difference.

I believe that the spirit and purpose of the PPU is expressed more fully in persons than in resolutions.

BUT we must take the resolutions passed at the PPU Annual General Meeting as we find them. The first thing to note is that there was a very substantial minority against the major resolution on the Armistice Campaign (759 to 1,410).

Seeing that the resolution called upon the movement to give the Armistice Campaign "precedence over all other activities," it is manifest that a minority of over one third is significant. To be indicative of real determination in such a movement as ours the resolution needed to be practically unanimous.

Further, the resolution incorporated a very important proviso:

"... this AGM resolves to give the Armistice Campaign precedence over all other activities provided that with the campaign is associated a specific statement of positive social and economic principles which follow from the pledge and the four Affirmations, in order that there should be no misinterpretation of our motives and that the movement should not be associated with any elements which may desire peace from ulterior motives."

Obviously, these derivative "social and economic principles" have to be discovered and formulated in a specific statement before the Armistice Campaign can proceed. Obviously, too, if the campaign is to take precedence over all the other activities (of two thirds of our members) then the formulation of these "positive social and economic principles" must take precedence over all other activities—even the pursuance of the Armistice Campaign itself.

COMPLICATIONS.

This simple but perhaps unexpected situation is, however, complicated by the passing of another resolution, whereby the National Council was condemned for failing to act on the Armistice Committee's proposals

"for co-ordinating and directing the combined energies of both those who are able to make a simple 'stop-the-war-now' demand and those who feel that much preparation is needed before they can make such a demand to their fellow-citizens."

The National Council was in-

structed to set up an Armistice Committee to work on that principle.

But, evidently, it is only those "who feel that much preparation is needed" who count in terms of the major resolution. Those who are able to make a simple stop-the-war-now demand are outside the Armistice Campaign which has been resolved. For the effect and presumably the intention of the major resolution, with its proviso, is to lay down that much preparation is needed.

CAMPAIGN MUST WAIT

We are committed—in so far as a definite resolution can commit us—to discover and formulate the positive social and economic principles which follow from the Pledge and the four Affirmations, before embarking on any Armistice campaign. Those who don't want to wait will have to wait—or will they not?

I do not know the theoretical answer to that conundrum. I do not even know the answer to the question of which it is a particular form: Are resolutions passed by AGM policy directives, or simple suggestions?

What is abundantly plain to me is that the resolutions on Armistice Campaign, if they are to be interpreted as binding resolutions, and not as simple suggestions, have the effect of postponing an Armistice Campaign. I will not say *sine die*, but for a long while, for the discovery and formulation of the positive social and economic principles which follow from the Pledge and the four Affirmations is the Dickens of a job.

I am sure that the job should be tackled. But do the advocates of an Armistice Campaign as the primary activity of the PPU realize that, by sponsoring this resolution, they have immediately relegated an Armistice Campaign to the position of the secondary activity of the PPU? That is, in sober fact, what they have done.

A CAMPAIGN "ONLY IF—"

Moreover, they have also committed themselves to a campaign for an Armistice only if it can be associated with certain as yet undiscovered and unformulated positive social and economic principles. Let us ask a few pertinent questions.

Is sovereign national independence one of them? If not, by what new principle is it to be superseded? By political federation? If so, how is the new federation practically conceived? Is it peace—with the policeman—after all?

I am like Rosa Dantle: I only want to know. Also I want to warn. If those resolutions are to be interpreted as positive directives for the editorial policy of Peace News, then the consequences will be that, even more than hitherto, the paper will be devoted to the attempt to hammer out those positive social and economic principles which derive from the pledge to renounce war.

I make no prognostication. But I suspect that none of those principles, when discovered, will be found half as relevant to an Armistice Campaign as the original pledge itself: "I renounce war and refuse to support or sanction another."

The mover of the resolution referred to above as "condemning" the National Council and "complicating" the major Armistice resolution writes:—

The phrase "much preparation is needed," in the reference-back motion, has been misunderstood in this article as meaning that pacifists need to prepare themselves for an Armistice Campaign by working out the details of their social and economic policy. An examination of "the Armistice Committee's proposals," to which it referred, would show that it meant that some pacifists feel much preparation of the public mind is necessary before it will contemplate a negotiated settlement.

The instruction to the National Council which was coupled with the motion does not, therefore, complicate the major resolution but merely directs that the Armistice Campaign—whether postponed by reason of the proviso or pursued simultaneously with the discovery of the social and economic principles which follow from the Pledge—shall combine the energies of all who desire to achieve an armistice as soon as possible.

SOME NOTES FOR CAMPAIGNERS

BIRMINGHAM armistice campaigners are to hold three public meetings: two on May 29, in the Co-operative Halls in Stratford Rd., Hall Green (3 p.m.), and Rookery Rd., Handsworth (7 p.m.); one at 11 a.m. on May 30 at The Gables, Finch Rd., Handsworth. The Rev. Patrick Faggis will speak at each.

REFERRING to the "encouraging" resolution in support of the Spanish offer of mediation, passed recently by a meeting of citizens at Whitwell, Isle of Wight (PN, May 7), a Stretford, Lancs., reader writes:

Now that the "silence" has been broken, it is to be hoped that the matter will be urgently considered by Groups, Regions, and Areas and acted upon.

Though fear of Communism may have some influence upon the Spanish Government, it seems more likely that the offer is motivated by the realities of the present situation. This is well expressed by General Franco in his further appeal at Almeria: "Sooner or later the fight would become so balanced that it would come to a standstill and the nations would then want peace which they now refuse."

Implicit in this is a realization that unless the war can be ended by negotiation its probable outcome will be mutual exhaustion with grave danger to European civilization. We should take the lead in urging the acceptance of such mediation offers, remembering with the author of "Christocracy" that "sanity is the next best thing to pacifism."

Let us, therefore, recapturing the spirit of the PPU AGM, endeavour to create a national demand for the acceptance of Spain's "good offices." If we do that, I think we shall find considerable support from men and women of good will.

A poster which can be suitably displayed even in districts where an Armistice Campaign seems most difficult to undertake has just been published by the Friends' Peace Literature Committee. It reads:—

DURABLE PEACE

can be attained

ONLY BY NEGOTIATION

It is obtainable from the Northern Friends' Peace Board, Friends' Meeting House, Clifford St., York, or the Friends' Peace Committee, Friends House, Euston Rd., N.W.1.

G. F. Dutch writes of the armistice resolution discussed at the recent quarterly meetings of the London Co-operative Society:—

"The resolution was defeated over all the 31 meetings, by 219 to 2,415. An amendment demanding 'the unconditional surrender of the Axis Powers' was carried by 2,455 to 219. At the final meeting we got 27 votes: best sectional meeting votes for peace were: Romford 25, Walthamstow 16, Greenford 13.

"The notice of motion was signed by 512 pacifists, and as the minority vote included many who had not signed, it is clear that some of our friends have let us down rather badly. We specially asked that none should sign unless prepared to attend a meeting and vote; the signature alone had no weight. There should have been a peace vote of not less than 1,000, if all signatories had regarded their action seriously.

"There were good debates at many meetings, and solid pioneer work has been done which will bear fruit later. The Daily Worker thinks we are 'utterly crushed,' but we shall show up again in due course. However much we may deplore Communist policy and tactics, a little of the same disciplined zeal in our far better cause might not be out of place."

Will Coppin adds:

"I should like to thank the 603 persons who signed the resolution to the London Co-operative Society submitted in my name and that of the Secretary of the Co-operative War Resisters' Association, Mr. A. E. Moir, asking for an Armistice. Only 514 members' names and addresses were submitted to the Society, so that we have about 90 in hand. As I am going to prison it will not be possible for me to take an active part in further campaigns for a time.

"Despite the fact that only 219 pacifists turned up to the 31 meetings, I was well satisfied to propose the resolution at three meetings. I hope a number of people will think as I do, and make a continuous campaign submitting the resolution every quarter however the vote may go."

PRACTICAL POLITICS

A Statement On Immediate Political Issues

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Virginia Conference

IT has been stated by the British Government that relief is not covered by the programme for the Virginia Conference. But whether the question is worked into the Agenda or discussed informally by the delegates, it is evident that many Americans will expect some pronouncement from this gathering of United Nations food experts.

The text of a message to the Carnegie Hall mass meeting in Feb. has just reached this country. The Rev. John O'Brien, the Catholic spokesman, wrote:

"I hope and pray that every American citizen will thunder to our Congress and to our Federal Government the solicitude deepest in the hearts of our people, the solicitude which cries: 'Get food to the starving children of Europe not when they are in their graves but, in the name of God and in the name of humanity, get it to them now!'"

HOOVER—AGAIN!

In an article in Colliers (Feb. 20) Herbert Hoover and Hugh Gibson tell the inside story of the beginning of Greek relief. The Ministry of Economic Warfare tried to dissuade Turkey, who replied by announcing the date on which their ship would sail with relief, thus challenging attack. M.E.W. wisely decided to make a virtue of necessity and sanction the relief.

Hoover also reveals that Norwegian sailors in New York have made it plain that if the food situation grows worse in their country and they do not get permission to sail with relief, they will strike.

George L. Carpenter, General of the Salvation Army, in a letter to The Times on May 15 appeals for controlled relief for children in occupied territories and gives the interesting information that five Salvation Army cheap-food restaurants are already operating in Brussels. From their experience the General is confident that the system of controls would be effective.

The International Red Cross Committee now owns nine cargo ships flying the Red Cross flag, according to The Times, May 5. They brought from America 100,000 tons of goods for distribution among prisoners of war in the course of 151 transatlantic voyages.

LONDON CONFERENCE

Professor Cammaerts was one of the speakers at the important conference organized by the National Council for Maternity and Child Welfare at the Royal Institution in London on May 6, which was attended by delegates from all parts of the country. "If we had not sent some relief to Greece," he said, "we should have liberated a graveyard. If we do not send relief to Belgium, we shall liberate not a graveyard but a hospital."

M. Michaelopoulos, Greek Minister of Information, a French spokesman, a delegate from the Save the Children Fund, Edith Pye, and others also spoke emphatically of the need for relief.

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Conscience as a "Common Law Right"?

ON the ground that the absence of a conscience clause in Orders and Regulations issued under the Emergency Powers Act rendered them invalid in Common Law, Charles Varney, a New Eltham PPU member, pleaded "not guilty" to failing to register for Civil Defence duties.

Appearing at Woolwich police court, he maintained that in Common Law—"the historical, unwritten general customs and usages of this country"—the integrity of conscience had been a fundamental principle and had become a Common Law right. The magistrate said that if this were so, then all the Orders under that Act might be ultra vires.

He was sentenced to 3 months' imprisonment, but was released on bail pending appeal. The appeal, on the grounds that "the decision is ultra vires and contrary to Common Law," will be heard early in June.

On behalf of the local authority it was stated that no prosecution would have been undertaken had not local residents brought pressure to bear through other channels, thus placing the authority "in an invidious position." A warden who gave evidence said

that Charles Varney was obviously sincere in his objection to registration, and that he had voluntarily performed fire-guard duty.

Knowing that the new Fire-Watching Orders were in preparation, the Central Board for Conscientious Objectors on May 10 wrote fully to Mr. Herbert Morrison, Minister of Home Security, explaining that the absence of any conscience clause had led to many refusals to register for compulsory fire-watching, and recording that to Mar. 31 the Board knew of 293 prosecutions of 242 people in this connection, of which 27 prosecutions related to 26 women. A strong case was made for the Minister to recognize conscientious objection.

In view of official statements that women expressing a conscientious objection to war work would not be directed to such work, the position of Miss Margaret Gale, of Romford, is interesting. Turned down by the local and appellate tribunals, she received a direction to work as a munition worker at a factory. The Ministry of Labour argued that this was in order, since the tribunal decisions left her liable for military service.

The Central Board took up the matter, and the Ministry withdrew the direction, arranging to direct her to non-military work, though stating that they could not "depart from the principle that a woman whose name has been

removed from the register of conscientious objectors is liable for national service."

When Mrs. Thelma C. Shuttleworth, of Kensington, was charged at W. London police court on May 12 with failing to comply with directions under the Civil Defence Duties (Compulsory Enrolment) Order, it was stated that her husband, Bertram Shuttleworth, was serving a twelve months' sentence in Wormwood Scrubs for failing to comply with a condition of exemption. She was fined £10, with the alternative of fourteen days' imprisonment. She went to prison, and will be released on May 25, six days before her husband.

The same sentence was imposed upon Miss M. H. C. Clements, who was charged with a similar offence.

John Gilligan (31), musician and composer, chairman of Lancaster PPU Group, was sent to prison for two months at Lancaster city police court on May 13 for failing to conform to a Ministry of Labour direction to work on the land. He protested against his "persistent persecution, not prosecution." It was the third year in succession he had been before the court because of his conscientious objection to war, and he had spent the greater part of last year in prison as a result of failing to be medically examined.

ADVISORY BUREAUX

Leeds.—Ernest Bradbury, 69, Cemetery Rd., Beeston Hill, Leeds 11.

Northampton.—Gerald Wooding, 50 Kingsway, Northampton.

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

FOR SALE AND WANTED (Cont.)

WAR RESISTERS' INTERNATIONAL would welcome gifts of foreign stamps, for subsequent sale on behalf of W.R.I. funds. Any such gifts received with gratitude. Please send to the War Resisters' International 11 Abbey Rd., Enfield, Middlesex.

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FREDERICK BOWMAN'S peace poem postcards, 2d.; songs, 6d. "Talking Picture News," 210, Westbourne Grove, London, W.11.

QUAKERISM. Information and literature respecting the Faith and Practice of the Religious Society of Friends, free on application to the Friends' Home Service Committee, Friends' House, Euston Road, London, N.W.1.

LAND & COMMUNITY

BROTHERS WANTED for Franciscan community on Free-Catholic lines in original tradition of Dr. Orchard, etc.; synthesis of Catholic and Evangelical worship, etc. Profitable book and church furnishing business established; no capital needed from applicants; land and crafts community will be started soon. Full information and literature 6d. Box 878 PN, 3 Blackstock Rd., N.4.

FREE Accommodation, produce for anyone keen garden and craftwork giving 5 hrs. daily. Prospect, wage or partnership. Windmill, Hullbridge-on-Crouch, Essex.

MEETINGS, &c.

BIRMINGHAM. Campaign for Armistice. Three public meetings: Sat., May 29, 3 p.m., Co-operative Hall, Stratford Rd., Hall Green; 7 p.m. Co-operative Hall, Rookery Rd., Handsworth; Sun., May 30, 11 a.m., The Gables, Finch Rd., Handsworth. Speaker: Rev. Patrick Figgis.

JAMES MAXTON, W. G. Cove, Ethel Mannin, Fenner Brockway, Sybil Morrison, Dorothy Evans, Walter Padley, Howard Whitten at Trafalgar Sq. on Sat., May 29, at 3.30. Indian Freedom Campaign demonstration.

LEATHERHEAD AND ASHTEAD Group. On May 26 at 8 p.m. at Broome House, Elm Drive, Leatherhead. The Speaker will be John Barclay.

MANCHESTER, Houldsworth Hall; Reginald Sorensen, John Hoyland: "Free India Now"; Tues., May 25, 7 p.m. Tickets 6d., 1s., Friends Meeting House.

THE ANARCHIST CASE. Weekly Lectures on Anarchism and related topics every Wed., 7.15, at 8 Endsleigh Gns., Euston Rd., W.C.1. Organized Central London Libertarian Anarchist Movement.

THURSDAY, May 27, 7.45 p.m., Friends Meeting House, Bushwood, Leytonstone. E.10 and E.11 Group Meeting. John Barclay.

YOUTH HOUSE is "At Home" on Mon. evenings for lecture, discussion, dancing, and sociability. 24th at 7.30, Maurice Rowntree on "Where do we go from here?" Vegetarian dinner (every day) 6.15 to 7. Programme of cultural and recreational activities from Organizing Secretary Youth House, 250 Camden Rd., N.W.1.

PERSONAL

ANYONE INTERESTED in hospital work, Winchester, get into touch with Mr. C. Waller, 50, Hatherley Rd., Winchester.

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DESMOND ROUGHT'S Introductions by Post closing down. Service still for members to date via new address: c/o G.P.O., Birmingham.

GROUP C.O.s on Land-Work would appreciate Cricket tackle or Football. Write Crawshaw, 14 Grove Lane, Timperley, Cheshire.

HACKNEY BOYS CLUB requires keen woodwork instructor; also tools as gift or t. buy. Kimber, 21 George St., W.1. Welbeck 1564.

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YOU SHOULD COME to Trafalgar Sq. on Sat., May 29, at 3.30 to hear James Maxton, W. G. Cove, Ethel Mannin, Fenner Brockway, Sybil Morrison, Dorothy Evans, Walter Padley, Howard Whitten. Indian Freedom Campaign demonstration.

SITUATIONS VACANT

CHRISTIAN PACIFIST Land Units have vacancies for employment under County War Agricultural Executives or farmers and in afforestation. Christian pacifists with or without land experience write Secretary, Room 16 (PN), Kingsway Hall, London, W.C.2.

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NURSERY HELPERS, Domestic Staff, and Cook required for hostel, refugee and evacuee children, Brecon. Apply International Commission, 67 Brook St., W.1.

TEMPORARY APPOINTMENT of an Area Organizer. The Western Area Council P.P.U. invites applications for a temporary appointment for three months only commencing July. Duties will be to assist Area Council in development. Maximum salary £4 weekly plus expenses. Applications with references to reach Will Parkin, Fallowfield, Backwell Hill, Flax Bourton, nr. Bristol, before June 9.

WANTED, DOMESTIC HELP, Christian Pacifist preferred. Modern home, good surroundings; live in, or daily; wage according to suitability. Apply 34 Bramhall Park Rd., Bramhall, Cheshire.

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